COACHELLA VALLEY MOUNTAINS CONSERVANCY

Regular Meeting – July 12, 2004, 3:00 PM 73-710 Fred Waring Drive, Conference Room 115 Palm Desert, CA 92260

Tele-conference location- July 12, 2004, 3:00 PM Resources Agency, 1416 9th Street, Room 1305 Sacramento, CA 95814*

AGENDA

- 1.0 Call to Order
- 2.0 Approval of Minutes of May 10, 2004 meeting
- 3.0 Public Comments

At this time any member of the public may address the Governing Board on any item. The Board cannot take action on an item not on the agenda, but it can place it on the agenda for a future meeting.

- 4.0 Action Items
 - 4.1 Election of Chair and Vice-Chair
 - 4.2 Resolution 2004-09 approving a grant to the Friends of the Desert Mountains for the acquisition of approximately 212 acres in Whitewater Canyon. [See Attachment 1.]
 - 4.3 Resolution 2004-10 approving a grant to the Friends of the Desert Mountains for the acquisition of approximately 20 acres of private inholdings in the Cathton property area. [See Attachment 2.]
- 5.0 Closed Session No matters are scheduled.

Pursuant to Government Code sections 11126 (a)(1), 11126 (e)(1) and 11126.3(a) the Board may hold a closed session to discuss and take possible action on personnel matters and or receive advice of counsel on pending or potential litigation. In addition, pursuant to Government Code section 11126 (c) 7 (A) the Board may meet in closed session with its negotiator prior to the purchase or sale of real property by or for the state body to give instructions to its negotiator regarding the price and terms of payment for the purchase or sale. Confidential memoranda related to these issues may be considered during such closed session discussions.

6.0 Reports

- 6.1 Fiscal and Administration [See Attachment 3.]
- 6.2 Acquisitions and Funding [See Attachment 3.]
- 6.3 MSHCP/NCCP [See Attachment 3.]
- 6.4 Attorney General's Report [See Attachment 3.]
- 6.5 Presentation on Acquisition Partnership Accomplishments [CVAG will assist with a brief GIS presentation.]
- 6.6 Board Member comments and reports from Conservancy member agencies. This is an opportunity for any of the Governing Board Members to present a report on matters of interest regarding the agency he or she represents.

7.0 Adjourn to September 13, 2004 meeting

*NOTICE OF TELECONFERENCE MEETING:

Three members of the Conservancy Board, Dave Harper, Don Wallace, and John Donnelly, will attend the meeting via teleconference. The location of this teleconference site is open to the public and accessible to the disabled.

This agenda is available on our website at http://www.cvmc.ca.gov. Anyone with questions about any item on the agenda may contact Katie Barrows or Bill Havert at 73-710 Fred Waring Drive, Suite 205 Palm Desert, CA 92260. The phone number is (760) 776-5026.

ATTACHMENT 1 - July 12, 2004

Agenda Item 4.2. Resolution 2004-09 approving a grant to the Friends of the Desert Mountains for the acquisition of approximately 212 acres in Whitewater Canyon.

BACKGROUND

The Friends of the Desert Mountains has requested a grant for up to \$287,000 towards the acquisition of approximately 212 acres in Sections 22 and 27, T2S R3E, in Whitewater Canyon [see attached map]. The total purchase price is \$850,000. Up to an additional \$10,000 is assumed for closing costs. The Friends would raise the balance of the funds needed from private contributions, including individuals, foundations, and other non-profit organizations.

The property is located in Whitewater Canyon in unincorporated Riverside County. Acquisition of the property would help consolidate conservation ownership along the Whitewater River. The area is proposed for conservation in the MSHCP because of its important habitat values for the endangered arroyo toad and triple-ribbed milkvetch, the threatened desert tortoise, and the narrow endemic Little San Bernardino Mountains linanthus. The area is also part of a wildlife movement corridor between the San Jacinto Mountains and the San Bernardino Mountains. The Friends has previously acquired 200 acres in Whitewater Canyon with a grant from the Conservancy. With the acquisition of the proposed property, only two other significant parcels would remain to be acquired in Whitewater Canyon besides the Whitewater Trout Farm, which is not for sale. The two other parcels are 106 acres and 123 acres in size. The remainder of this area is BLM land. The property proposed for acquisition currently has a Surface Mining Permit application pending. The County has required the preparation of an EIR. Acquisition of the property by the Friends would preclude mining on the property.

In terms of the funding situation, the Conservancy had a carryover of approximately \$6,642,000 from FY 2002-03 of Proposition 40 funds. \$8,000,000 in additional Proposition 40 funds was appropriated for the current fiscal year. Thus, a total of approximately \$14,642,000 was available at the beginning of FY 2003-04. To date this fiscal year, approximately \$7,663,600 has been expended in acquisition projects, leaving a balance of approximately \$6,978,400. The following additional amounts have been committed:

\$ 960,000	Grant to the Friends for approximately 384 acres in Chino Canyon
\$2,950,000	Balance of grant to The Nature Conservancy for the Cathton property
\$ 46,500	Grant to the Friends for 5 acres in the National Monument
\$3,956,500	TOTAL APPROVED NOT YET DISBURSED

The current balance of Prop 40 funds unexpended and uncommitted is, therefore, \$3,021,900. Thus, there are sufficient funds available to fund the proposed project. Staff is also keeping in mind other potential acquisitions that may appear before the Board in

the next few months in recommending approval of the grants before the Board this month.

In 2004-05, the Conservancy should receive an additional \$2.9 million in Proposition 40 funds. In addition, approximately \$478,000 has come back to the Conservancy from the Friends as reimbursement from the sale to USFS of land purchased by the Friends with a Conservancy grant. This should be available in FY 2004-05.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends approval of the Resolution 2004-09 approving a grant for up to \$287,000 to the Friends of the Desert Mountains for the acquisition of approximately 212 acres in Whitewater Canyon.

RESOLUTION 2004-09 OF THE GOVERNING BOARD OF THE COACHELLA VALLEY MOUNTAINS CONSERVANCY ADOPTED IN REGULAR SESSION July 12, 2004

RESOLUTION APPROVING A LOCAL ASSISTANCE GRANT TO THE FRIENDS OF THE DESERT MOUNTAINS FOR ACQUISITION OF PROPERTY IN WHITEWATER CANYON

WHEREAS, Public Resources Code Section 33501 created the Coachella Valley Mountains Conservancy for the purpose, among other things, of acquiring and holding, in perpetual open space, mountainous lands surrounding the Coachella Valley and natural community conservation lands, upon approval of a Natural Community Conservation Plan, for the protection of natural and cultural resources and the public's enjoyment thereof; and

WHEREAS, Public Resources Code Section 33601(e) provides that the Conservancy may "in order to further the conservancy's purposes as set forth in Section 33501, award grants to cities, counties, resource conservation districts, or nonprofit organizations...."; and

WHEREAS, the Friends of the Desert Mountains ("Friends") is a nonprofit organization qualified as an exempt organization under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954, and has as its purpose the acquisition and protection of land in the Coachella Valley area; and

WHEREAS, APNs 514-240-008 and 009, and APN 514-260-001, comprising approximately 212 acres in Sections 22 and 27, T2S R3E in Whitewater Canyon, possess important biological resource values including critical habitat for the endangered southwestern arroyo toad, and habitat for the endangered triple-ribbed milkvetch, the threatened desert tortoise, and the narrow endemic Little San Bernardino Mountains linanthus; and constitute part of a wildlife movement corridor between the San Jacinto Mountains and the San Bernardino Mountains; and

WHEREAS, it is in furtherance of the Conservancy's purposes as established in Public Resources Code Section 33501 to protect this area; and

WHEREAS, the parcel has been appraised at \$850,000 and the owner has agreed to sell the property to the Friends for that amount; and

WHEREAS, the Friends requests a local assistance grant in the amount of \$287,000.00 to assist in the purchase of this property, with the Friends securing the balance of the funds needed; and

WHEREAS, the Conservancy has sufficient capital outlay money in Proposition 40 to fund the grant; and

WHEREAS, this acquisition is exempt from further CEQA review pursuant to sections 15061 (b) (3), 15313, 15316, and 15325 of the Code of Regulations, Title 14;

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved in regular session of the Governing Board of the Coachella Valley Mountains Conservancy that the Board approves a grant of \$287,000 to the Friends to assist with this acquisition; and

BE IT FURTHER resolved, that this grant is contingent upon the availability of a policy of title insurance to be issued to the Friends and upon an inspection showing that there are no hazardous materials on the site; and

BE IT FURTHER resolved, that a condition of the grant is that the Friends shall enter into an Acquisition Grant Agreement with the Conservancy, which shall contain provisions requiring the following:

- 1. That the Friends will agree to defend, indemnify, and hold harmless the Conservancy and the State of California, its contractors, officers, directors, agents or employees against any and all claims, liability, demands, damages, debts, judgments, costs, or expenses, including reasonable attorney's fees, arising out of or in any way connected to the Grantee's actions, omissions, or other conduct relating in any way to this agreement and the Real Property, including, but not limited to, any such losses, damages, or expenses arising out of (a) loss of or damage to the Real Property, and (b) injury to or death of persons;
- 2. That the Friends shall execute a Memorandum of Understanding with the Conservancy designed to assure that the properties acquired with the grant sum shall be protected, maintained, and managed consistent with the Conservancy's mission as defined in Public Resources Code Section 33501;
- 3. That the Friends must return all funds not used for the acquisition purpose described above no later than December 31, 2005, unless both parties mutually agree in writing to an extension;
- 4. That the Friends shall not convey title or any other interest in the properties acquired with the grant sum to any other person or entity without the express written approval of the Conservancy;
- 5. That upon the sale or conveyance of any interest in the property acquired with the grant sum, the Friends shall reimburse the Conservancy for the full amount of the grant sum unless the funds received from the sale or conveyance are less than the amount of the grant sum, whereupon the Friends shall provide the Conservancy with all funds obtained from the sale or conveyance less costs incurred by the Friends arising from the sale or conveyance;

- 6. That if the Friends ceases to exist as an organization or if the Friends materially breaches the grant agreement, title to the properties acquired with the grant sum shall automatically be conveyed to the State of California upon approval by the State Public Works Board;
- 7. That the Friends shall maintain accounting records of how the grant sum was spent for a period of three years and shall make such records available for inspection by the Conservancy upon the Conservancy's request; and
- 8. That the Conservancy shall review and approve all documents pertaining to the acquisition of the properties described above, including but not limited to title reports, obtained by the Friends prior to acquisition of said properties.
- 9. That any unused grant funds must be returned to the Coachella Valley Mountains Conservancy, along with any accrued interest, not later than one month after the project completion date. Should interest be earned on the grant funds between their disbursement and expenditure for the purchase of the property, the interest may be applied toward the purchase price. Otherwise, any such interest must be paid to the Coachella Valley Mountains Conservancy. No revenue will be generated by Grantee from the property acquired with the grant funds.

BE IT FURTHER resolved that the Board hereby authorizes its Chairperson, or in his absence the Executive Director, to execute any and all documents necessary to effect the grant.

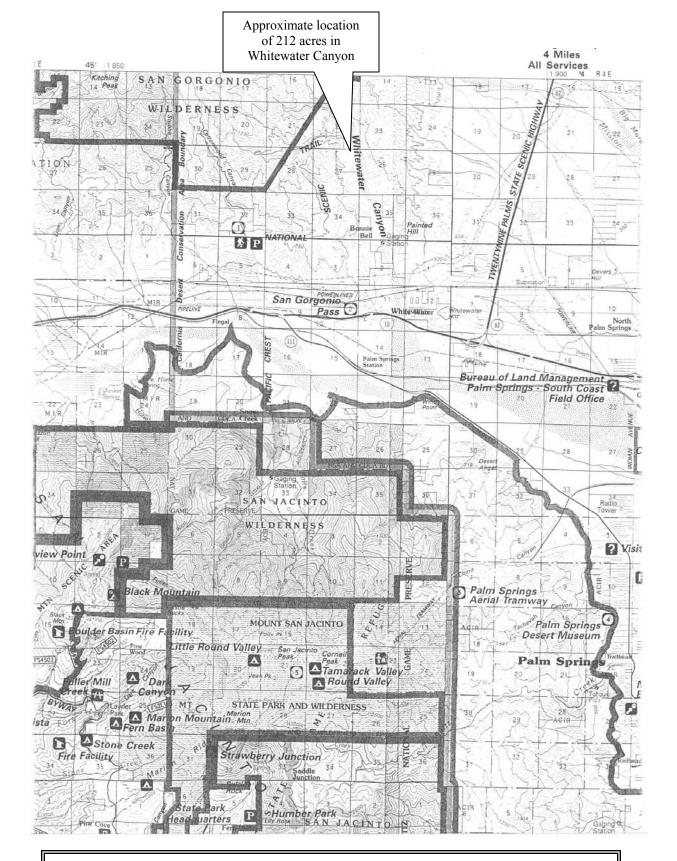
PASSED, APPROVED, AND ADOPTED at a regular meeting of the Coachella Valley Mountains Conservancy Governing Board, held on this 12th day of July, 2004, by the following vote, to wit:

AYES:	
NOES:	
ABSTENTIONS:	
ABSENT:	
	Allan Muth, Chairman
	Coachella Valley Mountains Conservancy
ATTEST:	
Clara Slifkin	
Deputy Attorney General	

EXHIBIT A

LEGAL DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY

[A legal description of the property will be prepared by the Title Company and provided to the Conservancy by the Friends prior to the disbursement of grant funds.]



Attachment 1: Agenda Item 4.2

Location of property in Whitewater Canyon proposed for acquisition through a grant to Friends of the Desert Mountains.

ATTACHMENT 2 – July 12, 2004

Agenda Item 4.3 Resolution 2004-10 approving a grant to the Friends of the Desert Mountains for the acquisition of approximately 20 acres of private inholdings in the Cathton property area.

BACKGROUND

The Friends of the Desert Mountains has requested a grant to acquire four 5-acre parcels in Section 30, T3S R7E in the "Joshua Hills" area [see attached map.]. The property is located in unincorporated Riverside County between the Coachella Valley Preserve in the Indio Hills area and Joshua Tree National Park. Section 30 is located in the middle of the Cathton property, approximately 4,520 acres of which was recently required by a multi-entity acquisition partnership, including the Conservancy. An additional approximately 4,361 acres is in escrow to be acquired before September 30, 2004. Section 30 consists primarily of 5-acre parcels. Of the approximately 661 acres that comprise this section, approximately 158 acres are BLM land. An additional 173+ acres are being acquired as part of the Cathton property purchase. The Friends has previously acquired eight 5-acre parcels in Section 30 with its funds. This leaves a balance of approximately 290 acres in parcels privately owned in this Section. Both for biological and management reasons, it is highly desirable to acquire the remaining private parcels in Section 30. The opportunity currently exists to acquire the aforementioned four 5-acre parcels for \$3,200/acre. This is the per acre appraised value of the Cathton property. This is \$16,000 per parcel or \$64,000 for all four parcels, plus closing costs. The total grant would up to \$70,000 (purchase price and closing costs).

As explained in Attachment 1 and assuming the Governing Board approves the grant proposed in Attachment 1, the Conservancy has a current balance of Prop 40 funds unexpended and uncommitted of \$2,734,900. Thus, there are sufficient funds available to fund the proposed project. Staff is also keeping in mind other potential acquisitions that may appear before the Board in the next few months in recommending approval of the grants before the Board this month. In 2004-05, the Conservancy should receive an additional \$2.9 million in Proposition 40 funds. In addition, approximately \$478,000 has come back to the Conservancy from the Friends as reimbursement from the sale to USFS of land purchased by the Friends with a Conservancy grant. This should be available in FY 2004-05.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends approval of resolution 2004-10 approving a grant of up to \$70,000 (purchase price and closing costs) to the Friends of the Desert Mountains for the acquisition of approximately 20 acres of private inholdings in the Cathton property area.

RESOLUTION 2004-10 OF THE GOVERNING BOARD OF THE COACHELLA VALLEY MOUNTAINS CONSERVANCY ADOPTED IN REGULAR SESSION JULY 12, 2004

RESOLUTION APPROVING A LOCAL ASSISTANCE GRANT TO THE FRIENDS OF THE DESERT MOUNTAINS FOR ACQUISITION OF PROPERTY IN THE JOSHUA HILLS AREA

WHEREAS, Public Resources Code Section 33501 created the Coachella Valley Mountains Conservancy for the purpose, among other things, of acquiring and holding, in perpetual open space, mountainous lands surrounding the Coachella Valley and natural community conservation lands, upon approval of a Natural Community Conservation Plan, for the protection of natural and cultural resources and the public's enjoyment thereof; and

WHEREAS, Public Resources Code Section 33601(e) provides that the Conservancy may "in order to further the conservancy's purposes as set forth in Section 33501, award grants to cities, counties, resource conservation districts, or nonprofit organizations...."; and

WHEREAS, the Friends of the Desert Mountains ("Friends") is a nonprofit organization qualified as an exempt organization under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954, and has as its purpose the acquisition and protection of land in the Coachella Valley area; and

WHEREAS, APNs 741-070-002, 741-070-003, 741-070-007, and 741-090-005 comprising approximately 20 acres in Section 30, T3S R7E in unincorporated Riverside County between the Coachella Valley Preserve in the Indio Hills area and Joshua Tree National Park possess important scenic and biological resource values; and

WHEREAS, it is in furtherance of the Conservancy's purposes as established in Public Resources Code Section 33501 to protect this area; and

WHEREAS, the parcels have been established to have a value of \$16,000 per parcel, totaling \$64,000, and the owners have agreed to sell the properties to the Friends for that amount; and

WHEREAS, the Friends requests a local assistance grant for the purchase of this property; and

WHEREAS, the Conservancy has sufficient capital outlay money in Proposition 40 to fund the acquisition; and

WHEREAS, this acquisition is exempt from further CEQA review pursuant to sections 15061 (b) (3), 15313, 15316, and 15325 of the Code of Regulations, Title 14;

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved in regular session of the Governing Board of the Coachella Valley Mountains Conservancy that the Board approves a grant of up to \$70,000 (purchase price and closing costs) to the Friends for this acquisition; and

BE IT FURTHER resolved, that this grant is contingent upon the availability of a policy of title insurance to be issued to the Friends for each parcel and upon an inspection showing that there are no hazardous materials on the site; and

BE IT FURTHER resolved, that a condition of the grant is that the Friends shall enter into an Acquisition Grant Agreement with the Conservancy, which shall contain provisions requiring the following:

- 1. That the Friends will agree to defend, indemnify, and hold harmless the Conservancy and the State of California, its contractors, officers, directors, agents or employees against any and all claims, liability, demands, damages, debts, judgments, costs, or expenses, including reasonable attorney's fees, arising out of or in any way connected to the Grantee's actions, omissions, or other conduct relating in any way to this agreement and the Real Property, including, but not limited to, any such losses, damages, or expenses arising out of (a) loss of or damage to the Real Property, and (b) injury to or death of persons;
- 2. That the Friends shall execute a Memorandum of Understanding with the Conservancy designed to assure that the properties acquired with the grant sum shall be protected, maintained, and managed consistent with the Conservancy's mission as defined in Public Resources Code Section 33501;
- 3. That the Friends must return all funds not used for the acquisition purpose described above no later than December 31, 2004, unless both parties mutually agree in writing to an extension;
- 4. That the Friends shall not convey title or any other interest in the properties acquired with the grant sum to any other person or entity without the express written approval of the Conservancy;
- 5. That upon the sale or conveyance of any interest in the property acquired with the grant sum, the Friends shall reimburse the Conservancy for the full amount of the grant sum unless the funds received from the sale or conveyance are less than the amount of the grant sum, whereupon the Friends shall provide the Conservancy with all funds obtained from the sale or conveyance less costs incurred by the Friends arising from the sale or conveyance;

- 6. That if the Friends ceases to exist as an organization or if the Friends materially breaches the grant agreement, title to the properties acquired with the grant sum shall automatically be conveyed to the State of California upon approval by the State Public Works Board;
- 7. That the Friends shall maintain accounting records of how the grant sum was spent for a period of three years and shall make such records available for inspection by the Conservancy upon the Conservancy's request; and
- 8. That the Conservancy shall review and approve all documents pertaining to the acquisition of the properties described above, including but not limited to title reports, obtained by the Friends prior to acquisition of said properties.
- 9. That any unused grant funds must be returned to the Coachella Valley Mountains Conservancy, along with any accrued interest, not later than one month after the project completion date. Should interest be earned on the grant funds between their disbursement and expenditure for the purchase of the property, the interest may be applied toward the purchase price. Otherwise, any such interest must be paid to the Coachella Valley Mountains Conservancy. No revenue will be generated by Grantee from the property acquired with the grant funds.

BE IT FURTHER resolved that the Board hereby authorizes its Chairperson, or in his absence the Executive Director, to execute any and all documents necessary to effect the grant.

PASSED, APPROVED, AND ADOPTED at a regular meeting of the Coachella Valley Mountains Conservancy Governing Board, held on this 12th day of July, 2004, by the following vote, to wit:

AYES:	
NOES:	
ABSTENTIONS:	
ABSENT:	
	Allan Muth, Chairman Coachella Valley Mountains Conservancy
ATTEST:	
Clara Slifkin	
Deputy Attorney General	

EXHIBIT A

LEGAL DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY

[A legal description of the properties will be prepared by the Title Company and provided to the Conservancy by the Friends prior to the disbursement of grant funds.]

Draft legal descriptions are as follows:

PARCEL 1 (APN 741-070-002)

THE WEST HALF OF THE SOUTHEAST QUARTER OF THE NORTHWEST QUARTER OF THE NORTHEAST QUARTER OF SECTION 30, TOWNSHIP 3 SOUTH, RANGE 7 EAST, SAN BERNARDINO BASE AND MERIDIAN, ACCORDING TO THE OFFICIAL PLAT THEREOF.

PARCEL 2 (APN 741-070-003)

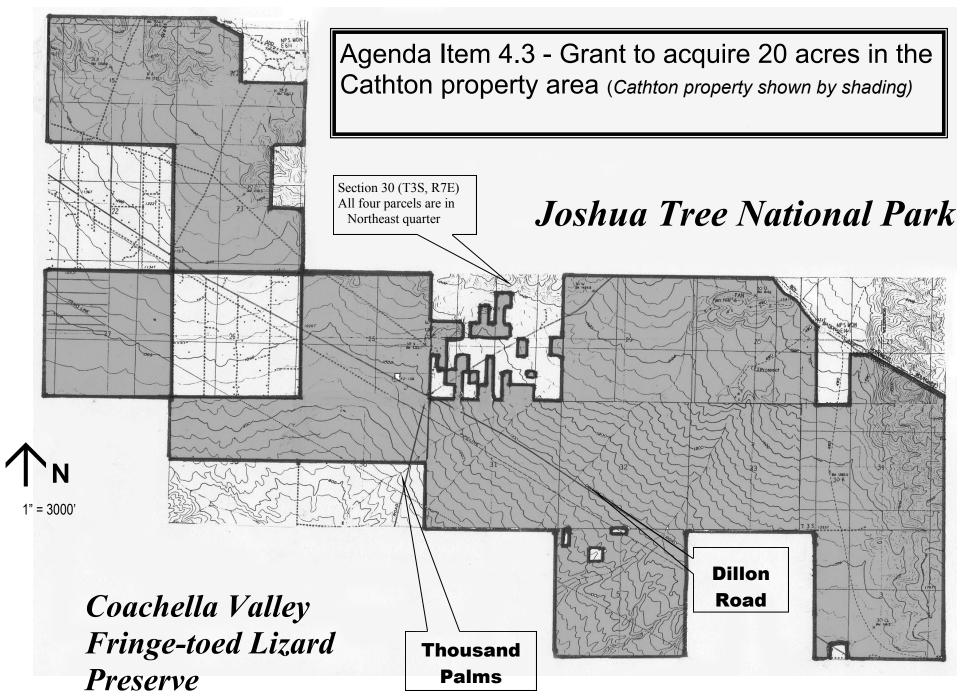
THE EAST HALF OF THE SOUTHEAST QUARTER OF THE NORTHWEST QUARTER OF THE NORTHEAST QUARTER OF SECTION 30, TOWNSHIP 3 SOUTH, RANGE 7 EAST, SAN BERNARDINO BASE AND MERIDIAN, ACCORDING TO THE OFFICIAL PLAT THEREOF.

PARCEL 3 (APN 741-070-007)

THE EAST HALF OF THE SOUTHEAST QUARTER OF THE NORTHEAST QUARTER OF THE NORTHEAST QUARTER OF SECTION 30, TOWNSHIP 3 SOUTH, RANGE 7 EAST, SAN BERNARDINO BASE AND MERIDIAN, ACCORDING TO THE OFFICIAL PLAT THEREOF.

PARCEL 4 (APN 741-090-005)

THE EAST HALF OF THE NORTHEAST QUARTER OF THE SOUTHEAST QUARTER OF THE NORTHEAST QUARTER OF SECTION 30, TOWNSHIP 3 SOUTH, RANGE 7 EAST, SAN BERNARDINO BASE AND MERIDIAN, ACCORDING TO THE OFFICIAL PLAT THEREOF.



ATTACHMENT 3

Agenda Item 6.0: Reports

6.1 Fiscal and Administration

- > Staff is exploring the potential to create a full time Administrative Assistant position.
- ➤ The CVAG Executive Committee approved the new contract for the Conservancy for preparation of the MSHCP in 2004-05. The Conservancy Governing Board approved the contract at its May meeting.

6.2 Acquisitions and Funding

- Escrow closed on the first phase (4,520 acres) of the Cathton Investments, Inc. property. The second phase (4,361 acres) is scheduled to close by September 30, 2004.
- The Center for Natural Lands Management (CNLM) has acquired approximately 76 acres in the Willow Hole area. In coordination with the Conservancy, CNLM is pursuing additional acquisitions in the Willow Hole, Thousand Palms, and Whitewater Floodplain Conservation Areas.
- > Staff is working with the Trust for Public Land (TPL), exploring the potential for TPL to assist in the acquisition of approximately 1,340 acres in the Thousand Palms Conservation Area and the Stubbe & Cottonwood Canyons Conservation Area.
- ➤ The Friends has closed escrow on twelve acquisitions in the Santa Rosa Mountains Wilderness totaling 422.32 acres in the Santa Rosa Mountains Wilderness, and has sixteen more properties in escrow in the Santa Rosa Mountains, Mecca Hills, and Orocopia Mountains Wilderness Areas. These acquisitions are being accomplished with a \$1.3 million grant obtained by the Friends from the Resources Legacy Fund Foundation with assistance from the Conservancy.

6.3 <u>Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan/Natural Community Conservation Plan</u> (Plan)

The Plan, Draft Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement (DEIR/EIS), and Implementing Agreement (IA) are currently undergoing review by the Regional Office of USFWS in Portland and the USFWS Solicitor. After completion of this step and publication of a notice in the Federal Register, the documents will be released for public review and comment. USFWS and CDFG have now agreed to a schedule that provides for meetings at the end of July to address Solicitor and Regional Office comments. This would allow release of the Public Review Draft, and IA by the end of September. The schedule also shows final approval of the Plan and issuance of the permits by the end of April, 2005.

6.4 Attorney General's Report.

Clara Slifkin will provide an oral report as needed at the meeting.